

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I request the FCC to require that owners/operators of toll-free and 900 telephone numbers be identifiable. This could be possible by regulation prohibiting telephone service providers from "blocking" such numbers, or by requiring telephone service providers to offer "reverse lookup" through directory assistance or an on-line database. This would empower consumers and lighten the load on FCC investigative efforts. It would stop unsolicited faxers from operating behind the anonymous veil of toll-free numbers. As you know, regular telephone numbers are more easily traced and can be telephoned by a consumer without disclosing the caller's telephone number.

Justification for such regulation: While federal regulations provide that the telephone number of a call to a toll-free number is displayed to the receiver and cannot be blocked, a caller has no way to determine the company or location that is operating a toll-free or "900" number. Therefore, while a citizen or business may have the legal right to pursue action against such operators, there is no way to identify and locate them to initiate such action. They can operate anonymously and, therefore, autonomously. Unsolicited faxes rely on such toll-free and "900" numbers. Telephone service providers currently are under no incentive to assist consumers in tracking these calls and faxes. Business activities in our country are commonly required to register ownership information so that such businesses can be identifiable to the public; telephone service should not be an exception.

The FCC should empower consumers by providing them with the right to determine a billing party and location address that operates a toll-free or "900" telephone number.

Thank you,  
W. Reed  
Lancaster, CA